

Baptism and an Illustration from Marriage (Cont. from pg. 1) refuse baptism for the remission of sins as alien sinners (Matthew 7:21-23)? In love we implore you to think about these things.

By Kyle Pope



References to Baptism Under Christ

Making disciples involves baptism.....Matthew 28:19
 He who believes & is baptized will be saved....Mark 16:16
 Jesus' had His disciples baptize people....John 3:26; 4:1,2
 Peter taught repentance and baptism.....Acts 2:38
 Converts on Pentecost were baptized.....Acts 2:41
 Those in Samaria were baptized.....Acts 8:12
 Simon the Sorcerer was baptized.....Acts 8:13
 Baptism is a part of preaching Jesus.....Acts 8:35,36
 The Ethiopian eunuch was baptized.....Acts 8:38
 Saul was baptized.....Acts 9:18
 Cornelius' household was baptized.....Acts 10:48
 Lydia was baptized.....Acts 16:15
 The Philippian jailer was baptized.....Acts 16:33
 The Corinthians believed & were baptized.....Acts 18:18
 One is baptized in the name of Christ.....Acts 19:5
 In baptism sins are washed away.....Acts 22:16
 One is baptized into Christ's death.....Romans 6:3
 One is buried with Christ through baptism.....Romans 6:4
 Paul baptized people in Corinth.....I Corinthians 1:13-17
 One is baptized into one body.....I Corinthians 12:13
 In baptism one puts on Christ.....Galatians 3:27
 There is one baptism in Christ.....Ephesians 4:5
 One is buried with Christ in baptism.....Colossians 2:12
 Baptism in an elementary principle.....Hebrews 6:2
 Baptism now saves us.....I Peter 3:21

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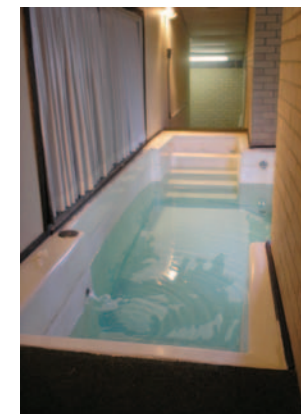
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Baptism & An Illustration From Marriage



Here is the issue when it comes to baptism: *“If baptism is necessary for salvation, how is it that God saves us and not our own ‘work’ of salvation?”* While doing some study on the subject of marriage the following illustration from marriage seemed to me to address this very question.

In the debate that has gone on for years with the religious world over baptism a common stumbling-block for many has been the matter of salvation by grace versus slavation by merit.

From what the Bible teaches, marriage is something that occurs on two levels: what man does and what God does. The book of Malachi (Cont. on pg. 2)

Baptism and an Illustration from Marriage (Cont. from pg. 1)

speaks of a man's wife as his **"wife by covenant"** (Malachi 2:14). This part of the marriage union depends upon man. It is he who chooses a mate, then chooses to - **"leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife"** (Genesis 2:24). This "joining" refers to whatever the recognized custom is for identifying those who are and who are not married. In our culture it involves a marriage license, the exchange of vows and witnesses. In other cultures it may involve the giving of a dowry, jumping over a broom or simply declaring to the village elders the intention to be husband and wife.

On the other hand, the Bible also tells us that there is something in marriage that God alone does. Malachi 2:14 tells us **"the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth."** In the next verse, the text goes



on to declare what God does when such a covenant is made is to **"make them one"** (2:15). This Divine part of the relationship is such that the adulterous wife is one **"who forsakes the companion of her youth and forgets the covenant of her God"** (Proverbs 2:17).

Jesus echoes this truth when he commands **"what God has joined together, let not man separate"** (Matthew 19:6). While man cannot "make" God join him to a wife, when two people who have the right to marry enter into a civil covenant with one another, God witnesses it and joins them together Himself.

How does all this relate to baptism? Baptism, is much like the civil covenant that pronounces a marriage between a man and a woman. It is our choice to be baptized or not, but when we are the Bible tells us that we are **"baptized in to Christ Jesus"** (Romans 6:3). Is this

a deed that merits salvation? No - No more than a marriage ceremony makes God join a man and a wife.

To extend the illustration a bit further, are there ever times when two people join themselves yet God does not join them? Absolutely! Such is the case with homosexual unions, polygamous unions, incestuous unions or adulterous unions. In the same way, baptism doesn't make God save anyone! If a person is dunked in the water without true faith and repentance, they are engaged in a meaningless ritual. By the same token, if two people simply commit themselves to one another without the authority of a civil union (however simple or complex this may be) are they joined by God? No - No more than a person who simply makes a mental commitment to accept Jesus as Lord is saved!

Baptism is not a magical, mystical experience. Its power rests in what God has accomplished in Christ. Yet,



baptism is something that God has commanded for any who would come to Him. Unlike a marriage ceremony, whose procedures can be dictated by law and social custom, God has proscribed the specific manner and purpose of baptism. Baptism is to be **"for the remission of sins"** (Acts 2:38) by which you may **"wash away your sins"** (Acts 22:16) be **"buried with Him"** (inferring immersion) **"in baptism"** (Colossians 2:12) and **"put on Christ"** (Galatians 3:27). It is presumptuous indeed to imagine that one can teach that it is not necessary and not face judgment for such arrogance.

To all who believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, I say to you it is your duty to act upon your faith by submitting to Scriptural baptism. Just as God views those who live together without the sanction of legal marriage as fornicators (Heb 13:4; John 4:18) will He not view those who believe in His Son yet **(Cont. from pg. 4)**